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Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 150406

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---------- 054486
R 260057Z JUN 75
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY KIGALI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 150406

EXDIS, FOR AMBASSADOR DAVIS

FOL REPEAT STATE 149122 SENT ACTION KINSHASA JUN 25

QTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 149122

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, CG, US

SUBJECT:VANCE MISSION: HINTON STATEMENT AND US PRESS
GUIDANCE

REFS: KINSHASA 5643 AND 5576

FOR VANCE

1. DEPT HAS JUST REACHED AMB. HINTON IN SAN SEBASTION
AND HAS GOTTEN HIS DETAILED ACCOUNT OF WHAT, TO BEST OF
HIS MEMORY, HE SAID TO PRESS UPON ARRIVAL IN MADRID:
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PAGE 02 STATE 150406

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

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Q. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT ZAIRE'S CHARGES AGAINST THE US?

A. IT IS A REGRETTABLE MISUNDERSTANDING. I AM CONVINCED THAT PRESIDENT MOBUTU BELIEVES THAT THE US WAS INVOLVED IN A PLOT AGAINST HIM. WE KNOW THIS TO BE FALSE. IF HE BELIEVES IT, HOWEVER, WE HAVE TO ASK HOW WAS THIS POSSIBLE. MY EXPLANATION IS THAT SOME ANTI-WESTERN INDIVIDUALS MUST HAVE MISLED HIM, FED HIM FALSE EVIDENCE.

Q: WAS THE CIA INVOLVED IN A PLOT AGAINST MOBUTU?

A: THAT IS NONSENSE, PREPOSTEROUS.

Q: WERE YOU WELL TREATED WHEN YOU LEFT ZAIRE?

A: YES, I WAS. THEY WERE VERY COURTEOUS.

Q: WERE YOU MOLESTED OR MISTREATED?

A: ABSOLUTELY NOT.

Q: WAS THERE ANYONE FROM THE GOVT OF ZAIRE TO SEE YOU OFF AT THE AIRPORT?

A: YES, THERE WAS A PROTOCOL OFFICER.

HINTON ALSO RECALLS HAVING SAID AT SOME POINT IN THE EXCHANGE SOMETHING ALONG FOLLOWING LINES: "THIS IS PARTICULARLY REGRETTABLE BECAUSE THERE ARE MANY THINGS THAT WE ARE WORKING WITH THE GOVT OF ZAIRE TO ACCOMPLISH. I HOPE THAT THE MISUNDERSTANDING WILL BE CLEARED UP BY AMB. VANCE."

2. HINTON REPORTS STATEMENTS IN PARA 1 ABOVE WERE GIVEN TO UPI AND REPEATED IN ESSENTIALLY SAME TERMS FOR TAPING BY CBS RADIO. IN CBS INTERVIEW HINTON ALSO RECALLS SAYING SOMETHING ABOUT THE CURRENT ATMOSPHERE IN THE US, THE CHARGES THAT HAVE BEEN MADE AGAINST THE CIA AND THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THESE FACTORS HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE DRAWING OF MISTAKEN CONCLUSIONS ABOUT US
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INVOLVEMENT IN ZAIRE. HINTON COMMENTED TO DEPTOFF THAT, IN REFERRING TO THE LIKELIHOOD THAT ANTI-WESTERN ELEMENTS HAD MISLED MOBUTU, HE WAS TRYING TO GET MOBUTU OFF THE HOOK FOR RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CHARGES THAT HAVE BEEN MADE AGAINST THE US.

3. YOU MAY DRAW UPON INFORMATION ABOVE AS YOU JUDGE NECESSARY AND DESIRABLE IN TALKING WITH MOBUTU. YOU

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Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006

SHOULD MAKE CLEAR USG ATTACHES GREAT VALUE TO ITS
RELATIONS WITH ZAIRE, DOES NOT REGARD MOBUTU AS UNDER
ANTI-AMERICAN AND ANTI-WESTERN INFLUENCE, AND HAS SENT
YOU TO CLEAR UP MISUNDERSTANDING WHICH HAS ARISEN BETWEEN
US. YOU SHOULD MAKE CLEAR THAT ANYTHING HINTON MAY HAVE
SAID IN THIS REGARD IS DISAVOWED AND DOES NOT REPRESENT
TE POLICY OF USG.

4. CONCUR FULLY WITH YOUR RECOMMENDATION PARA 4
KINSHASA 5643 THAT WE SHOULD AVOID ANY FURTHER PRESS
STATEMENTS WHICH COULD BE TAKEN BY MOBUTU AS CHALLENGE.
WITH THIS AIM IN MIND, DEPT SPOKESMAN VOLUNTEERED NO
STATEMENT ON ZAIRE SITUATION AT PRESS BRIEFING JUNE 23 OR

24, AND UNLESS SITUATION CHANGES MATERIALLY WILL VOLUNTEER
NO FURTHER STATEMENTS WHILE YOU ARE IN KINSHASA. IF ASKED
STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN WILL STRESS USG ATTACHES
GREAT VALUE TO ITS RELATIONS WITH ZAIRE, IT DOES NOT
REGARD MOBUTU AS UNDER ANTI-AMERICAN AND ANTI-WESTERN
INFLUENCE AND HAS SENT YOU TO CLEAR UP MISUNDERSTANDING
WHICH HAS ARISEN BETWEEN US. WE WILL ARRANGE FOR VOA
TO KEEP TO AN ABSOLUTE MINIMUM ANY COVERAGE ON ZAIRE
SITUATION AND SEEK TO ASSURE THAT IF ANYTHING IS SAID
IT ADHERES SCRUPULOUSLY TO THE ABOVE LINE. NO QUESTIONS
ABOUT ZAIRE WERE RAISED AT PRESS BRIEFING JUNE 23; AT
JUNE 24 BRIEFING THERE WAS SHORT EXCHANGE LIMITED TO
CONFIRMATION THAT YOU IN KINSHASA AND SEEING MOBUTU.
TRANSCRIPT JUNE 24 BRIEFING FOLLOWS. KISSINGER

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